

## Lesson 2: *Religious Resistance of Mexico's Indigenous Peoples*

Estimated Timeframe: 1 Day (90-minute class session)

<b>Brief Description of Lesson</b>	Through a primary source document-based inquiry, students will examine the beliefs and rituals of some Indigenous groups in Mexico at the time of the Spanish invasion and their resistance to Christianization efforts.
<b>Additional Supporting Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did Indigenous peoples in Mexico resist Catholicism?</li> <li>• Did Spanish Catholicism wholly replace the beliefs of Indigenous peoples during the colonial period?</li> </ul>
<b>TEKS &amp; C3 Frameworks</b>	<p>TEKS World History Studies:</p> <p>(6) History. The student understands the characteristics and impact of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec civilizations. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(B) explain how the Inca and Aztec empires were impacted by European exploration/colonization.</p> <p>(28) Social studies skills. The student understands how historians use historiography to interpret the past and applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(C) analyze primary and secondary sources to determine frame of reference, historical context, and point of view;</p> <p>(D) evaluate the validity of a source based on bias, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author;</p> <p>(E) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, drawing inferences and conclusions, and developing connections between historical events over time; and</p> <p>(F) construct a thesis on a social studies issue or event supported by evidence.</p>

	<p>(30) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) use social studies terminology correctly;</p> <p>(C) interpret and create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.</p>
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<p><b>Students will be able to...</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically analyze and interpret primary source documents relating to Indigenous beliefs and rituals in Mexico at the time of the Spanish invasion, Christianization efforts, and Indigenous resistance to these.</li> <li>2. Identify and describe elements of Indigenous beliefs and rituals in Mexico.</li> <li>3. Identify and describe elements of Indigenous resistance to Spanish Catholicism during the colonial period.</li> <li>4. Recognize and develop a counter-narrative to traditional/dominant narratives of Indigenous peoples, their beliefs and rituals in Mexico at the time of the Spanish invasion, and their response to Christianization efforts.</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b> Focus relevant to students' lives (5-10 mins)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The class will begin with a word cloud from pollseverywhere.com displayed on the class monitor. Students will respond to the question: What words do we think of when we think about religion in Mexico today?</li> <li>2. Next, the students will be shown two images side by side: The Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral and an image from Day of the Dead. Students are given the same prompt as before for a new word cloud.</li> <li>3. Students will be given a question to be answered briefly as a class and then revisited later: If the Spanish conquered Mexico and established Catholicism, you would expect to see the Mexico City's Metropolitan Cathedral, but why is Day of the Dead celebrated today?</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b> Access student's prior learning/knowledge (5 mins)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "In the last lesson, we learned about hegemony and the resistance of Indigenous peoples to the Spanish in Mexico. Specifically, we asked: how did Indigenous peoples in Mexico physically and militarily resist the Spanish invaders?"</li> <li>2. "Everyone should turn and talk to a partner about three ways Indigenous peoples in Mexico physically resisted the Spanish. In a couple of minutes, we are going to share out with the class."</li> <li>3. Share out answers to question as a class.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Introduction:</b> Preview of lesson/day's agenda (3 mins)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Today we are going to talk about the beliefs and rituals of Indigenous peoples in Mexico at the time of the Spanish colonization, with a focus on the Aztecs. And again, we are going to talk about resistance. We are going to ask the following questions: <i>How did Indigenous peoples in Mexico resist Catholicism? Did Spanish Catholicism wholly replace the belief systems of Indigenous peoples during the colonial period?</i>"</li> <li>2. The teacher will write essential questions on whiteboard and/or show them on a Google Slide presentation.</li> <li>3. "We are going to analyze these questions in three parts: (1) We are going to briefly look at the beliefs and rituals of Indigenous peoples and how they have been portrayed; (2) We are going to look at religious conversion and how the Spanish portrayed it; (3) We are going to look at resistance from the Indigenous peoples in Mexico."</li> <li>4. "The first two parts represent what could be called the "dominant narrative": the conquering Spanish, in the name of God, converting Indigenous peoples in Mexico from a primitive and violent belief system to Catholicism. And in examining those narratives, I want everyone to remember who is telling the story and question that story.</li> <li>5. The third part, resistance, is something that is looked at less closely, and I will let you all decide what that story means and how that story could be told."</li> </ol>
<p><b>Body:</b> Detail of activities</p>	<p>Activity 1 (source inquiry and classroom sharing) (1 hour):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will get together in groups of 4 to work on the attached handouts.</li> <li>2. Students will analyze and interpret primary source illustrations and read two secondary sources on Aztec religion and religious resistance. The teacher will direct the pace of the inquiry so that all groups are working on the same sources at the same time.</li> <li>3. Before each source is examined, instructors will provide students background information and context in relation to the sources they are examining.</li> <li>4. Students will share their interpretations and what they have learned in groups to the class.</li> <li>5. Instructor and students will pose questions to have mini discussions throughout.</li> </ol>

<b>Conclusion</b>	<p>Journal entry (15 mins): Students should write a journal entry answering the two essential questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did Indigenous peoples in Mexico resist Christianity?</li> <li>2. Did Spanish Catholicism wholly replace the beliefs and rituals of Indigenous peoples during the colonial period?</li> </ol> <p>Students should support each answer with evidence from three of the sources studied in class, specifically citing such sources in their answer.</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>Individual students will be assessed for their participation and contribution within group work and in overall class discussion. Groups will be assessed for their interpretation and analysis of primary source documents in presentations to the class. Individual understanding of the essential questions will be assessed through journal entries.</p>

## Lesson 2

### Supporting Question

- How did Indigenous peoples in Mexico resist Christianity?
- Did Christianity wholly replace the beliefs of Indigenous peoples during colonization?

### Formative Task

1. Students will conduct a primary source document-based inquiry related to Indigenous beliefs at the time of the Spanish invasion of Mexico and Indigenous resistance to conversion.

### Featured Sources:



*Story of King Acamapitzin*, José Guadalupe Posada, 1900. Acamapitzin, or Acamapichtli, was a Toltec prince who is considered the first Aztec Emperor (1367-1387) after the foundation of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City). Rare Book Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.



*The dream of Tenochtitlán, or, the origin of bloodthirsty fanaticism*, José Guadalupe Posada, 1900. Rare Book Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.



*Types of Sacrifices, which the Indians Presented on the Demonic Temple*, frontispiece for the second book titled, "Of the rites and customs of the Indians of New Spain in their infidelity," in *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana*, a history on the Order of St. Francis, Gerónimo de Mendieta, 1571. Joaquín García Icazbalceta Manuscript Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.





*The Supreme Holy Spirit Has Sent me to Evangelize*, frontispiece for *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana*, a history on the Order of St. Francis, Geronimo de Mendieta, 1571. Joaquín García Icazbalceta Manuscript Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.



Illustrated vow of profession to the Order of St. Augustin, Juan Velázquez Salazar, 1573. Genaro García Manuscript Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.



Frontispiece for the second part of the fifth book titled, "Of the minor friars who have been killed for preaching the Holy Gospel in this New Spain," in *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana*, a history on the Order of St. Francis, Gerónimo de Mendieta, 1571. Joaquín García Icazbalceta Manuscript Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.

## Lesson 2: Religious Resistance of Mexico's Indigenous Peoples

### Essential Questions:

- *How did Indigenous peoples in Mexico resist Christianity?*
- *Did Spanish Catholicism wholly replace the beliefs and rituals of Indigenous peoples during the colonial period?*

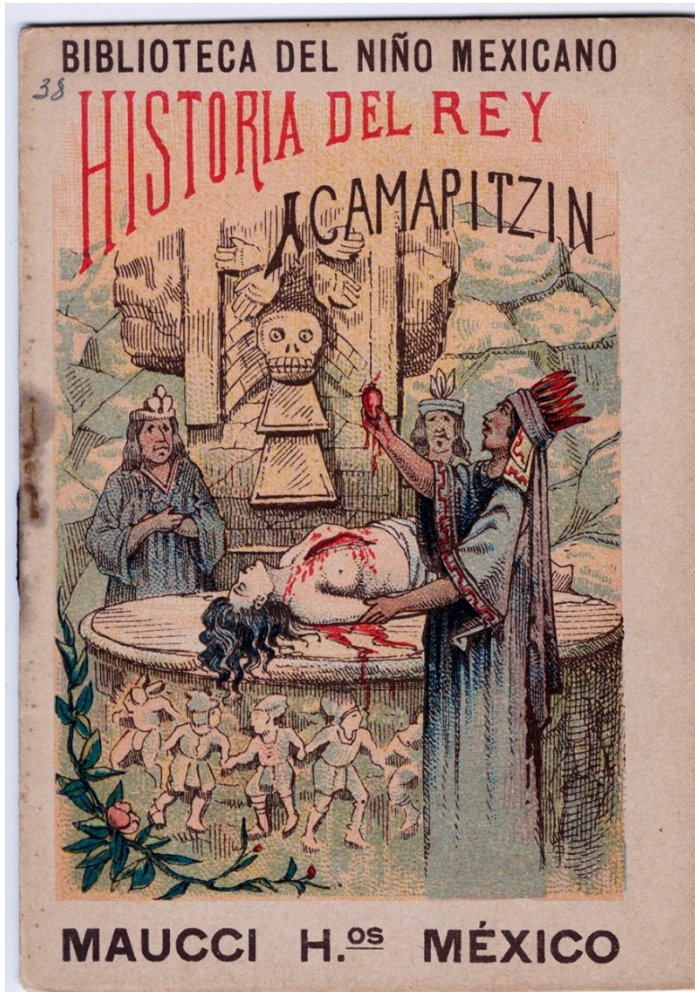
### Directions:

Each student should join a group of 4-5 students (5 groups total) to examine and analyze the following primary and secondary sources. Follow the instructions below and answer the following questions. We will share as a class as the directions provide below. Each group should rotate the person speaking to the class as we go through the sources below.



## Part I: Aztec beliefs and rituals at the time of the Spanish invasion

1. Carefully examine and analyze the primary sources below and answer the following questions.



Answer the following questions as a group. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class.

- How do these illustrations portray Indigenous rituals in Mexico? What is the focus of the illustrations?
- Whose point of view do you think the illustrations express?
- Are these illustrations consistent or inconsistent with your understanding of Indigenous rituals before the Spanish invasion? Why?
- How accurately do you believe these illustrations portray Indigenous rituals before the Spanish invasion?
- How would these illustrations support Spanish invasion and conversion of Indigenous peoples to Christianity?



2. Next, in groups, we will read some information about Aztec religion. You may read the articles in English or Spanish.

- Guilhem Olivier, *The Gods in Pre-Hispanic Central Mexico, part 1*
  - English: <https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/gods/gods-of-the-mexica-1>
  - Spanish: <https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/gods/los-dioses-en-el-mexico-central-prehispanico-1>
- Guilhem Olivier, *The Gods in Pre-Hispanic Central Mexico, part 2*
  - English: <https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/gods/gods-of-the-mexica-2>
  - Spanish: <https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/gods/los-dioses-en-el-mexico-central-prehispanico-2>

Group 1: Read “Introduction” (part 1) + “Vision of the World” (part 1)

Group 2: Read “Introduction” (part 1) + “Myths” (part 1)

Group 3: Read “Introduction” (part 1) + “The Universe of the Gods” (part 1)

Group 4: Read “Introduction” (part 1) + “Gods and Rituals” (part 2)

Group 5: Read “Introduction” (part 1) + “Gods and Society” (part 2)

Each group will teach what they have read to the class in a 1-2-minute summary by presenting 1 Google Slide to the class with bullet points. You should also address two questions:

- How does what you have read/learned complicate the first two images you studied above?
- What does the article say about Aztec beliefs and rituals that remain today?

3. Carefully examine and analyze the primary source below and answer the questions that follow.



Answer the following questions. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class. Be prepared to point to specific parts of the illustration that you used to answer these questions.

- How does this illustration of Aztec ritual compare to the two previous images?
- How is human sacrifice portrayed in this illustration compared to the two previous images?
- Identify specific parts of this illustration that reflect aspects of Aztec beliefs and rituals, including the relationship between nature and religion.
- Identify any part or parts of this illustration that stand out to you as important in telling a more complete story of Aztec beliefs and rituals.

Lesson plan based on Austin Independent School District's structure



## Part II: Conversion

1. Carefully examine and analyze the primary source below and answer the questions that follow.



Answer the following questions. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class. Be prepared to point to specific parts of the illustration that you used to answer these questions.

- What do you think is happening in this illustration?
- What is being shown in the seven boxes at the top of the illustration?
- Who is the person in the pulpit? How is the relationship between him and the audience portrayed?
- Who is the audience? How are they portrayed?

Lesson plan based on Austin Independent School District's structure



2. Carefully examine and analyze the primary source below and answer the questions that follow.



Answer the following questions. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class. Be prepared to point to specific parts of the illustration that you used to answer these questions.

- How are indigenous peoples portrayed in the frame around the text?
- Find some of the images that reflect animals/monsters. Why do you think these images are used?
- How does this portrait support the Spanish ideology that Indigenous peoples should be converted to Christianity?
- What does this portrait say about Indigenous resistance to Christianity?



### Part III: Resistance

1. Carefully examine and analyze the primary source below and answer the questions that follow.



Answer the following questions. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class. Be prepared to point to specific parts of the illustration that you used to answer these questions.

- What stands out to you most about this image?
- What story does this illustration tell about the Spanish conversion of Indigenous peoples?
- How does this illustration portray the Spanish missionaries? How does it portray Indigenous peoples?

Lesson plan based on Austin Independent School District's structure

2. Read the following article from the Smithsonian Magazine and answer the following questions. One student from each group will share answers and thoughts with the class.

Erin Blakemore's "Mexico City Dig Uncovers Traces of Aztec Resistance to Spain" in *Smithsonian Magazine*, July 6, 2017. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/mexico-city-dig-uncovers-traces-aztec-resistance-spain-180963970/>

- According to the article, how did Aztec resistance take place off the battlefield?
- What other forms of Indigenous resistance may still be seen in Mexico today?
- Based on this article, what can you conclude about the essential questions?